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AUTHOR Chall, Jeanne S.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

Using Jeanne Chall's widely applied model of reading development, this book examines the strengths and weaknesses in the reading, writing, and language development of children from low-income families to help identify the onset of their difficulties. The book shows how, in the transition from learning the medium to understanding the message, the demands on children's reading skills become significantly more complex. The book finds that lack of specific literacy skills--not cognitive factors--explains the deceleration in the reading and writing development of low-income children. Chapters in the book are: (1) Literacy and Language among Low-Income Children; (2) The Children, Their Schools, and Their Families; (3) Reading Development; (4) Writing Development; (5) Language Development; (6) Interrelations among Reading, Writing, and Language; (7) Classroom Instruction and Literacy Environments; (8) Home Influences on Literacy and Language; (9) Influences on the Lower and Higher Grades; and (10) Where Do We Go from Here? An epilogue addresses persistent questions based on the findings and offers recommendations. Contains 138 references. Appendixes present samples of narrative and expository writing representing average holistic ratings and production. (RS)

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